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1	United States Bankruptcy Court
2	One Bowling Green
3	New York, NY 10004
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5	May 14, 2020
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21	BEFORE:
22	HON STUART BERNSTEIN
23	U.S. BANKRUPTCY JUDGE
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25	ECRO: UNKNOWN

Page 3 HEARING re 08-01789-smb Conference on Letter of Baker & Hostetler dated March 5, 2020 re Mediation HEARING re 10-04889-smb Status Conference Transcribed by: Sonya Ledanski Hyde

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PROCEEDINGS

THE COURT: This is Judge Bernstein. Casey, would you start the recorder, please?

COURT REPORTER: The recording has been started.

THE COURT: Thank you. It's a couple of minutes before 10:00, but it looks like all the parties are here, at least on some of the cases. So I'll begin with Madoff.

MR. CREMONA: Good morning, Your Honor. Nicholas Cremona, of Baker & Hostetler, appearing on behalf of Irving Picard, as SIPC Trustee. We're here this morning to provide the Court with an update on the Picard v. Meisels case. As Your Honor may recall, this is a good faith action with approximately 3.295 million in fictitious (sound drop) remaining at issue.

This case is also proceeding on parallel tracks.

What I mean by that, Your Honor, is that the Defendant made
a motion to withdraw the reference. And because the

Defendant in this case did not file a customer claim, the

Trustee consented to the withdrawal of the reference and the
case is proceeding towards summary judgment before Judge

Gregory Woods.

The parties also simultaneously agreed to refer this case to mediation and to proceed with Judge Hurkin-Torres as the mediator. I'm happy to report that the parties conducted a virtual mediation using Zoom with all

parties and Judge Hurkin-Torres on April 24. The mediation resulted in productive and lengthy discussions among the parties, and also demonstrated that Zoom has been a very effective and viable way to conduct mediations during this time. I can report, that as of today, the parties have exchanged settlement offers and are continuing to negotiate, and the mediation remains open.

Based on the progress made to date, the Trustee reiterates his request to utilize mediation as the principal and most efficient way to resolve the remaining adversary proceedings with Chaitman LLP that will proceed before this Court.

The Trustee remains ready and willing to schedule mediations in the remaining cases and is willing to prioritize them in any order of the Defendants' choosing, as well as with any mediator that the Defendants choose from this Court's Registry of court-approved mediators.

And while we're certainly willing to proceed with Judge Hurkin-Torres in additional cases, as we previously discussed with Your Honor, it does not seem feasible for the parties to proceed with him as the sole mediator in all the cases. Again, you know, we're willing to mediate with any mediator proposed by the Defendant or appointed by this Court.

And for reasons we will discuss, including the

procedural differences and the nuances among the 60 total cases remaining with Chaitman LLP, a consolidated proceeding on the remaining issues does not seem workable, which is why the Trustee believes that mediation is the best way to keep these cases moving forward towards resolution.

So as an initial matter, the Trustee would like to explore with Ms. Chaitman and this Court whether the Defendants are willing to proceed with additional mediations in the near term with Judge Hurkin-Torres, as well as other mediators approved by this Court.

MS. CHAITMAN: Good morning --

THE COURT: What happens --

MS. CHAITMAN: -- Your Honor.

THE COURT: -- if you can't agree on the -- I just want to ask -- okay, maybe I'll ask you. Well, the question I have for both of you -- I haven't heard from you yet, Ms. Chaitman. It sounds like the Trustee is willing to continue with mediation. I know that there was an issue with the selection of the mediator last time.

I guess the question I'd have for both of you, before I hear from you, Ms. Chaitman, is what happens if you can't agree on the mediator? Normally, the Court would then just appoint a mediator from the registry. But go ahead, Ms. Chaitman.

MS. CHAITMAN: This is the first that I've heard

the Trustee's proposal. I would be happy -- I think that

Judge Hurkin-Torres -- the reason that I requested him was

that I think he's absolutely extraordinary at what he does.

And I do think that the mediation has been successful so

far, and we're going to continue the process with Judge

Hurkin-Torres. I'd be happy --

THE COURT: Do you have another session?

MS. CHAITMAN: Well, how was it left with -- I wasn't privy to your communications with the Judge, but how was it left in terms of whether we're going to have a formal meeting virtually, or whether it's just going to be communications with each of us by Judge Hurkin-Torres?

MR. CREMONA: I think it's probably the latter.

We left off with Judge Hurkin-Torres that we would reconvene

after today's hearing, and if he thought it's productive,

we're happy to do another session. So it was sort of left

open.

MS. CHAITMAN: Okay. So, from my client's perspective, either way is fine. Whatever is productive and can enhance the prospects of a resolution is fine. And as to all the other cases -- as I said, this is the first that I've heard this from Mr. Cremona -- I would like to proceed with Judge Hurkin-Torres to the extent that we can, because we've now educated him. And if he succeeds in settling this case, I think it's a great omen.

But I'm happy to try to work that out with the Trustee's counsel. I don't know that I needed to take up the Court's time. I'm not going to be rigid that it has to be Judge Hurkin-Torres, but obviously, the goal is to try to settle these cases. And if he has the ability to do that, that would be terrific. But I have to assume that we'll be able to agree on someone else if Judge Hurkin-Torres is not available.

THE COURT: Or why don't we do this? I think
we've exhausted the discussion on the record of this one.

Let me adjourn this, let's say for a couple of weeks, and
see if you can come back with a mutually agreeable proposal?

It sounds like the only issues are to prioritize the cases,
which the Trustee is leaving up to you, Ms. Chaitman.

And the issue of if Judge Hurkin-Torres isn't available, or for some reason he can't do it, you have to come up with a list of other possible mediators. But, you know, at the end of the day, if you can't, I'm going to have to appoint a mediator.

MS. CHAITMAN: Yeah, I think we'll be able to do that, Judge.

THE COURT: All right. Let me adjourn this. Two weeks from today is the 28th. So I'll adjourn this to the 28th. Don't wait until then to come back and say we're just starting to talk. It sounds like you're in basic agreement

Page 10 1 and you just have these couple of points to iron out. 2 I'll adjourn this to May 28th at 10:00. Okay? 3 MR. CREMONA: Thank you, Your Honor. 4 THE COURT: Now with respect -- okay. Now, with 5 respect to the other matter, the estate of Robert Shervyn, 6 is this your case also, Ms. Chaitman? 7 MS. CHAITMAN: Yes, it is. Savin, S-A-V-I-N. 8 THE COURT: Okay. S-A-V-E -- how is it spelled? MS. CHAITMAN: S-A-V -- the last name is S-A-V as 9 10 in Victor, I-N. 11 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. All right. Is this 12 going to be swept up in the mediation? 13 MS. CHAITMAN: Well, it's certainly one of my 14 cases, and if we're going to try to mediate all the cases, 15 we would. This is a case where there's a motion that's been 16 fully submitted to the District Court. So I don't know what 17 the Trustee would like to do with it, but it's been fully 18 submitted to Judge Wood. 19 THE COURT: Is this case -- did Judge Wood 20 withdraw the reference on this one? 21 MS. CHAITMAN: Yes. Well, there's a -- the 22 Trustee --THE COURT: Or there's a motion to withdraw there? 23 24 MR. CREMONA: Actually, Your Honor, this is 25 slightly different. This motion to withdraw the reference

Page 11 1 is pending before Judge Swain, and this is a case where the 2 Defendant did file a proof of claim. So the Trustee has 3 opposed the motion, and as Ms. Chaitman pointed out, it is fully briefed now and pending before Judge Swain. 4 THE COURT: All right. But is this a case that's 5 6 going to be part of this overall mediation proposal? 7 MS. CHAITMAN: Yes. Every case that I have would 8 be part of the mediation. 9 THE COURT: Is that also the Trustee's view? MR. CREMONA: Your Honor, we're happy to proceed 10 11 on parallel tracks and mediate the cases that are in some 12 cases before the District Court, as well as before Your 13 Honor. And I'm happy to go through the procedural 14 differences in the remaining cases if that's useful. 15 THE COURT: Well, if you're going to mediate them, 16 it's premature to go through all the differences. I assume 17 -- is this one of those cases where the Defendant filed a 18 claim, it was determined that there was no claim, and he 19 never objected? 20 MS. CHAITMAN: That's exactly right. determination letter said that if you don't object, this 21 22 will be your final determination. 23 THE COURT: Right. 24 MS. CHAITMAN: And he never objected. And you, at 25 the last conference --

Page 12 1 THE COURT: And then --2 MS. CHAITMAN: -- you had asked Mr. Cremona --3 THE COURT: Go ahead. MS. CHAITMAN: -- to brief that issue. Mr. 4 5 Cremona took the position that until the Second Circuit 6 ruled, the determination letter was not --7 THE COURT: Yeah. MS. CHAITMAN: -- final. And you asked him to 8 9 brief that issue. 10 THE COURT: Yeah. Mr. Cremona, are you going to brief that issue, or do you want to wait and see if this 11 12 matter can be wrapped up in the mediation? 13 MR. CREMONA: Well, Your Honor, I do think it's useful if we're going to discuss the issues to go through 14 15 the posture of the cases, because some of that was accurate 16 and some of that is inaccurate. So --17 THE COURT: Well, okay. Go ahead. I mean, I remember the letters that were sent --18 19 MR. CREMONA: Right. Your Honor --20 THE COURT: -- and you can use this as a test 21 case, I suppose, and raise the question where -- you know, 22 the claimant would -- the Defendant filed a claim, the 23 Trustee objected, and the claimant never objected to the objection, whether under the letter that was sent out, you 24 25 know, there was still a pending claim, or for whatever

reason, equitable jurisdiction exists. I assume it's the same argument in these types of cases or groups of cases.

MR. CREMONA: I think that's correct, Your Honor.

But there are three different categories of cases, okay? So as I mentioned, there are 60 remaining cases where Ms.

Chaitman and her firm are counsel. Of those cases, you have 17 that involve defendants were no claims were filed, like the Meisels case. In those cases, the Trustee agrees that they should proceed before the District Court, rather than engage in further delay litigating over withdrawal of the reference.

So as we mentioned, there are -- of those 17, eight cases have -- motions to withdraw the reference have been filed. In four of those cases, we've filed motions for summary judgment or agreed to briefing schedules. In other cases, the remaining, we're waiting for direction from the District Court, like for example, in Meisels we're waiting to hear from Judge Woods how to proceed.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. CREMONA: But then there's the latter category of cases is where we disagree, I think. And there's two buckets of those cases. You have 18 that involve defendants that filed customer claims, but no objections are pending.

And then 25 that involve defendants who filed claims and do have pending objections. And as Your Honor is aware, we

disagree on the procedural -- excuse me, the jurisdictional effect of the filing of that claim.

As we've articulated, we believe that the filing of the claim in and of itself submits the Defendant to the Bankruptcy Court's equitable jurisdiction for all purposes.

Ms. Chaitman disagrees, based on the briefing she alluded to before Judge Swain in the Savin matter. But what I would -- I give you all that by way of background, Your Honor, so you are aware.

So the matter is before, I would submit, three different courts right now on the equitable jurisdiction issue and the effect of the filing of the claim. One is Judge Swain in the Savin matter. The second is a matter that does not involve Ms. Chaitman, but is the exact same issue, in the Greiff proceeding, which is fully briefed and pending before Judge Schofield. The same issue there as the effect of Judge Broderick's decision in Mann, which we believe submits all of these defendants that filed claims to Your Honor's jurisdiction.

And as you may recall, Your Honor has the issue as well in the context of the motion to stay the trial in the Greiff case. There, Your Honor has to decide whether the underlying motion to withdraw will prevail on the merits.

In order to determine if there is a likelihood of success, then there's a basis to stay. If there is not, then the

stay motion should be denied.

So that's a long-winded way of saying, Your Honor, that that issue is pending before 3 courts, and it's the Trustee's position that it makes far more sense to proceed with mediations in the meantime until that issue is fully resolved, rather than trying to do any type of consolidated proceeding on the remaining issues that we had discussed with Your Honor at the last hearing.

THE COURT: Well, the question originally was do you want to brief the issue before me that if you file a claim, the Trustee objects, and the Claimant doesn't -- the Defendant doesn't object to that determination, whether there's equitable jurisdiction in this court. You can brief that issue. I'm not aware that it's been briefed. I know it may have been alluded to in the motion for a stay in Greiff, but, you know, motions to stay, it's a question of likelihood of success, although I would have to decide that.

So I'm asking you, do you just want to hold off on further briefing? First of all, do you want to brief it further, and then the second question is, do you want to hold off, pending the mediations? I'm talking about the Madoff case.

MR. CREMONA: I think we should proceed on parallel tracks, Your Honor, as where we started. That we should proceed with the mediation and we should also have a

Page 16 1 determination of this issue, which is critical, and it runs 2 through multiple cases, as I just stated. So we're happy to brief that --3 4 THE COURT: Do you want to -- okay, well, then the 5 question is do you want to brief it before me, or do you 6 want to just let the District Court decide in the context of 7 the motions to withdraw the reference? I'm just asking you 8 if you want to file another brief before me and do you want 9 10 MR. CREMONA: Your Honor --11 THE COURT: -- me to decide this issue? 12 MR. CREMONA: I don't want to waste the Court's 13 I think the issue is crystallized and (sound drop) time. 14 before two District Court judges right now. So we're happy 15 16 THE COURT: Okay. 17 MR. CREMONA: -- to let that get resolved and 18 proceed with mediations in the meantime. 19 THE COURT: Okay, fine. What I will do then is --20 I'm not sure there's anything further to do with Savin, but 21 I'll keep it on the calendar and we'll adjourn this matter 22 also to May 28th so that you can come back and report to me 23 on the progress you're making in terms of coming up with the 24 mediation protocol. 25 Anything else?

Page 17 MR. CREMONA: Nothing further. Thank you. MS. CHAITMAN: I have nothing further. THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. MS. CHAITMAN: Thank you. THE COURT: Just bear with me. I somehow got logged out of Court Solutions. (Whereupon these proceedings were concluded at 10:22 AM)

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Page 19 CERTIFICATION I, Sonya Ledanski Hyde, certified that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. M. dedarki Hyd-Sonya Ledanski Hyde Veritext Legal Solutions 330 Old Country Road Suite 300 Mineola, NY 11501 Date: May 15, 2020

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